

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 SY-05 SCA-01 H-02 /017 W

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O 311330Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6131

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FOR AF/W SMITH

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASEC, PINS, NI

SUBJECT: AMCIT ALLEGES ENTRY DENIED BY EMBASSY

REF: STATE 189685

1 ON TUESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY FOLLOWING REPORTS THAT UNIVERSITY STUDENTS PLANNED DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST AMERICAN AND BRITISH INSTALLATIONS, EMBASSY EXECUTED NORMAL RIOT PRECAUTIONS; (A) WARNING TO CIVILIAN COMMUNITY VIA ESTABLISHED WARDEN SYSTEM TO REMAIN AT HOME, INDOORS AND TO AVOID VICINITY OF CHANCERY; (B) RECALLED MSG DETACHMENT TO MAN DEFENSIVE POSITIONS THROUGHT EMBASSY AND ANNEX; (C) REMOVE ALL VEHICLES, OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE, FROM VICINITY AND (D) DISMISS ALL NONESSENTIAL AMERICAN AND LOCAL PERSONNEL.

2. AS BUSLOADS OF DEMONSTRATORS ARRIVED AND WERE OFF-LOADING NEAR MAIN GATE OF CHANCERY, BEFORE OUTBREAK OF ACTUAL VIOLENCE, SUBJECT AMCIT ACCCOMPANIED BY TWO BLACKS OF UNKNOWN NATIONALITY REQUESTING AUDIENCE WITH ECON/COM'L ATTACHE FOR BUSINESS REASONS. MSG ON DUTY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS, INFORMED AMCIT THAT BECAUSE OF ANTICIPATED DEMONSTRATIONS THE EMBASSY WAS CLOSED FOR NORMAL BUSINESS AND ADVISED HIM TO LEAVE AREA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. AS RECALLED BY MSG CPL. AND NCOIC, ALSO ON DUTY IN LOBBY, SUBJECT AMCIT AT NO REPEAT NO TIME INDICATED THAT HE WAS UNDER DURESS OR THAT HE DESIRED ENTRY FOR REASONS OF PERSONAL SAFETY.

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3. EMBASSY WAS IN NO MANNER INVOLVED WITH EXIT OF WCT TENNIS PLAYERS.

AS GUEST OF THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT, THEIR TRANSPORTATION OUT OF COUNTRY WAS ARRANGED AND PROVIDED SOLELY BY THE FMG.

4. IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS, MARINE GUARDS WERE INSTRUCTED TO SECURE BUILDINGS, DISMISS NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL, DENY ACCESS TO FOREIGN NATIONALS AND ADVISE ALL VISITORS THAT EMBASSY WAS CLOSED FOR NORMAL BUSINESS AND ENCOURAGED THEM TO LEAVE AREA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. INCIDENT IS VIVIDLY REMEMBERED BY MARINE CPL. AND NCOIC WHO RECALL CONVERSATION WITH AMCIT. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED NO COMPLAINTS FROM SCORE OF OTHER AMCITS STRANDED IN LAGOS AT TIME OF INCIDENT.

5. EMBASSY CONSIDERS THAT UNDER PREVAILING CIRCUMSTANCES, ACTIONS TAKEN DURING COURSE OF INCIDENT WERE BOTH PRUDENT AND WARRANTED AND THAT CRITICISM IS UNJUSTIFIED.

CAHILL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PHYSICAL SECURITY, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 JUL 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LAGOS08780
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760296-0844
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976072/aaaaaaawf.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 189685
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 JUL 2004 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <18 OCT 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMCIT ALLEGES ENTRY DENIED BY EMBASSY
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, NI, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006